



# Ad Val Advisor

*The Newsletter  
for Wyoming  
Property Tax  
Appraisers*

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## *Ad Valorem Tax Division Newsletter*

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## *From the Administrator*

I would like to take just a minute to say “howdy” to each County Assessor and his or her staffs here in the great state of Wyoming. I’m delighted to be here and I look forward to working with all of you. It has only been a few months since I was a County Assessor myself, and I promise that I won’t forget my experience in the county assessor’s role anytime soon. My first few days here have been consumed with acquainting myself with my staff, absorbing a “crash course” in Wyoming assessment law and regulation, and mastering that vexing modern technology of phone systems, computer software, networks, etc. that always seem to be unique to every office environment. (I did find the coffee pot, too.)

We at the Ad Valorem Division, and you as County Assessors have a great opportunity to

do exciting and innovative things in the next few months. Of course, I am speaking about the deployment of the new CAMA system and the related technological enhancements that are coming down the pike. I want to thank the Assessors that have been involved in this entire process to date, and I look forward to future Assessor participation in all aspects of this project. This is a gigantic project that will not be without challenges. Like anything worthwhile, launching a new statewide CAMA system will require patience, hard work, and—sometimes—a true sense of humor and compassion to complete. The vendor, the Ad Valorem Division, the Assessors and their staffs will bring this project to fruition together.

As the CAMA project moves forward, the Ad Valorem Division will continue to perform its other duties. Important as the new CAMA implementation is, there are many critical and necessary functions that the Division performs that will continue as well. I am blessed with a great staff here at the Ad Valorem Division. I know that they are committed to the many important tasks they perform in concert with the County Assessors to insure the fair and equitable assessment under the law of all taxable real and personal property in Wyoming.

I’m looking forward to meeting each of you. I will be attending the Assessors’ conference in Thermopolis in July. Additionally, I plan to be “on the road” to the counties over the coming weeks and months and I plan to visit you on your “home turf.” In the meantime, if you have any issues that you would like to

discuss with me, please feel free to call. The next few months will be exciting. It’s a great time to be in this business.

Wade W. Hall  
Administrator  
Ad Valorem Tax Division

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## **C**AMA Update

The Ad Valorem Tax Division is happy to report that some significant progress has been made with the TerraScan CAMA project. These significant steps were accomplished through the hard work of the Standards Committees, the Division staff and TerraScan.

1. There has been an on-going saga regarding the purchase of hardware for the new CAMA system. It has been part of the original intent of the project that the Division would purchase the hardware required to run the new CAMA system, but ownership of that hardware would ultimately become the responsibility of the County Assessor.

While this problem sounds simple enough, issues regarding State purchasing policies and the legal requirements of “granting” anything to the County caused an untold amount of problems. Therefore, the Department of Revenue is now in the process of researching options to get around the ownership issue. Regardless of how the purchase agreement comes down, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be written to establish the

terms of the hardware transfer to the counties. The MOU will include provisions for usage and maintenance until all of the details of the ownership transfer is complete.

We will be sending each County Assessor a detailed paper on the specifics regarding the purchase within the next two weeks.

2. The first CAMA Technical Standards committee on the agricultural land valuation model within TerraScan has finalized their portion of the contract. This committee, which is made up of Kurt Kremke, Kathy Treanor, Debbi Surratt, Dave Rauzi, Bob Eicher, Sarah Sitterle and Jeff Moore, completed their review of the document on Friday, June 6, 2003, during a teleconference held by the Division. We wish to convey our sincere thanks to the agricultural committee and their focus on completing this portion of the contract.

The CAMA project team here at the Ad Valorem Tax Division, believes we have all learned some important lessons during this process. The original CAMA committee had over three years to work out issues and come together on many important decisions. The newer committees, especially those working on portions of the contract, have far less time to arrive at a conclusion. Understandably, each person who participates in these initial committees has important points of view they wish to share. Unfortunately, these initial "standards" committees are simply addressing issues on the base TerraScan CAMA model. Many of the heated "appraisal" issues that need to be addressed will be forwarded on to the "appraisal" standards committees who will meet after the contract is signed.

Again, this process is an opportunity for the Assessors' Association to participate in the purchase of the new CAMA system. Understandably, the Division, the Assessors and the State Board of Equalization cannot expect to answer

or solve all of Wyoming's appraisal issues before the contract is signed!

3. The Division has been working feverishly at estimating the overall scope and price of the new CAMA system. As you might guess, this is a complex and time-consuming task. To complete this project successfully, the Division must ensure that we are buying all of the goods and services necessary to fully implement the project within budget. For the past several weeks, we have been surveying all of the counties on a myriad of different issues. All of this is being completed in an attempt to help finalize what the Division will ultimately have to support and fund.

The news from this effort looks very promising. According to our ongoing cost estimates, we are still safely within our budgeted amount. This is taking into consideration all of the initial hardware requests and the multitude of hidden costs that have inevitably started to appear since we have began finalizing the contract.

The really exciting part of this process is the Wyoming CAMA system that is starting to emerge. Without a doubt, we are all looking at a state-of-the-art CAMA system that has functionality that is well beyond anything we have had access to before! Our project team here at the State will start releasing information within the next week regarding the specifics of the purchase. This will include some standardized ways of exporting data from your existing County systems to TerraScan.

Thank you for all of your help and cooperation in this process. We look forward to seeing you in Thermopolis in July!

David Chapman  
Local Assessed Manager  
Ad Valorem Tax Division

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## **SPS Address Standards**

As part of last year's county visits, we presented a few ways to clean up your CAMA name and address data to ease the conversion process. We also provided you with web sites as references for street and state abbreviations, and zip code look-ups. The web sites have changed, and the new addresses are listed below.

### **United States Postal Service (USPS)**

<http://www.usps.com>

This is the main United States Postal Service web site address. Various information is accessible at this site, about mailings, zip codes, etc. The site contains different areas that you can access to help ensure consistency in your data, and possibly save money on your mailings.

### **USPS - Zip Look-Up**

<http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookups.htm>

The ZIP Code Look-Up and City/State ZIP Code Association are free services provided by the USPS to assist the public with their addressing needs. These services are being updated and reviewed daily for more accurate retrieval of data. Some large metropolitan areas require the entry of a best guess 5-digit ZIP code to retrieve the most accurate ZIP+4.

For more information on ZIP Codes you can call the toll free ZIP Code Information number at 800-275-8777.

This web site has the following links:

- ✓ *Zip+4 Code Look-up Engine*
- ✓ *City/State/Zip Code Associations*
- ✓ *Address Management System (AMS)*
- ✓ *Office Locator*

- ✓ *ZIP Code FAQs*
- ✓ *Official USPS Abbreviations*
- ✓ *Vendors and Licensees*

## USPS -Acronyms & Abbreviations

[http://www.usps.com/ncsc/looups\\_abbreviations.htm](http://www.usps.com/ncsc/looups_abbreviations.htm)

- Acronyms: *Codes like ACS (Address Change Service) use the first letters of each word.*
- State Abbreviations: *From AL (Alabama) to WY (Wyoming).*
- Street suffixes: *Whether you're addressing to an AVE (Avenue), BYU (Boulevard) or other type of RD (Road).*
- Secondary Unit Designators: *This site gives the correct listing of Apartments, Hangers, Spaces, Suites etc.*
- Abbreviations & Acronyms Used in Highway Transportation Box Delivery Service.
- Special Post Office acronyms, such as CSDD (Customer Service District Designee).

## Maximize Address Quality Minimize Cost

<http://www.usps.com/ncsc/>

This web site contains links to address management products and services.

- Address Information Systems (AIS) Database Products: *Products to enhance address standardization.*
- Address Management Product: *Tools for addressing software solutions.*
- Address Management Services: *Evaluation, grading and certification services.*
- Address Management Publications: *Publications related to Address*

*Management products and services.*

- Addressing Standards for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.
- Zip Code®Lookup and Address Information.
- Contact Address Management.

If you need a copy of the paper we provided you on the name procedures, please contact our office.

Joyln Stotts  
Appraiser  
Ad Valorem Tax Division

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## Employee Spotlight

It was mentioned in the last issue that we would be spotlighting Ad Valorem employees. However, Geir and I had a chance to talk with two of our new Board of Equalization members earlier this month, and we thought it would be a good idea to highlight them in this issue. We would like to introduce you to Alan Minier, who is the new Vice Chair, and Thomas Satterfield, a new member of the Board.



Tom Satterfield & Alan Minier, State Board of Equalization

Alan B. Minier has been with the Board of Equalization since being appointed by Governor Freudenthal in March 2003. Before joining the Board, Al worked in a private law practice in Cheyenne for 22 years. While there, he specialized in civil litigation and administrative law. He left law practice to volunteer for Governor Freudenthal's campaign as

Issues Director. Before working in private practice, Al worked on Governor Herschler's staff for two years.

Al was born and raised in western New York State. Prior to moving to Wyoming in 1978, he attended Yale and received a bachelor's degree in 1970. After completing his undergraduate degree, he attended Harvard Law School where he graduated in 1973. When asked about his chosen profession, Al mentioned that he most enjoys the intellectual challenge of his career.

In his spare time, Al enjoys spending time with Muffy, his wife of 20 years, and with his daughter, four stepchildren and seven step grandchildren. Some of his hobbies include reading, opera, being involved with the YMCA, and yard work.

**Favorite opera:** Don Carlos

**Favorite food:** Beer

Our next interviewee, Tom Satterfield, was appointed to the Board in April 2003. Prior to joining the Board, Tom worked in Federal Government with the USDA Soil Conservation Service for 20 years, and then moved to the USDI Bureau of Reclamation where he spent 7 years. While there, he worked as an agricultural engineer and a design engineer. In 1986, Tom was elected as a Fremont County Commissioner where he served 16 years.

Tom was born and raised in Casper, Wyoming, where he lived while attending school at Casper College. He then attended the University of Wyoming where he received a bachelor of science in Civil Engineering with a minor in Architecture in 1959. From 1961 until recently, he lived in Riverton. We asked Tom what he liked most about his career and he mentioned that with the Board and with previous jobs, things are never dull.

In his free time, Tom enjoys spending time with his wife Eryn of 43 years, their three grown children, and five grandchildren. Hobbies that he enjoys include reading, hiking,

spending time at their cabin near Dubois, and playing two-piano classical music with his wife.

**Favorite movie:** Ben Hur  
**Favorite food:** Rare Steak

Sarah Sitterle  
GIS Coordinator  
Ad Valorem Tax Division

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## The Public Access Issue

Did you know that TerraScan has a built-in public access feature in the new CAMA system? Public access can be obtained through the Internet (records can be retrieved from anywhere in the world), and/or from a public workstation in the Assessor's office. The TerraScan public access system is also very flexible when it comes to setting limitations on the type of information that the public may view.

Currently, there are a wide variety of thoughts among the Assessors on this topic. Our intention is to develop a statewide policy on public access that will set the standards for such a program throughout the state. Therefore, we will be contacting each office soon to evaluate the overall need for this feature, and to get an idea of what level of public access best suits the counties. We are also interested in your views on charging fees on the release of property records and/or GIS data via public access.

We encourage you to discuss this subject with other Assessors to get more input on possible advantages and disadvantages of having public access in place. Keep in mind that the discussions and final decisions on this issue will not effect current contract negotiations.

Geir Solvang  
Appraiser  
Ad Valorem Tax Division

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## Quote of the Month

"The power of taxing people and their property is essential to the very existence of government."

- James Madison

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## Annual Survey Results

Below are the some of the results from the annual County Assessor survey for the tax year 2002. Thanks for completing the form and sending it back to us. We will include the appeals statistics in the next issue.

### Upcoming Events and Courses

**7/8/03 – 7/10/03**  
Wyoming County Assessors  
Association Meeting,  
Hot Springs, WY

**7/14/03 – 7/18/03**  
IAAO Course 102  
Income Approach to  
Valuation,  
Lander, WY

**8/18/03 – 8/22/03**  
IAAO Course 201  
Appraisal of Land,  
Casper, WY

**9/23/03 – 9/25/03**  
IAAO Course 151  
Standards of Practice &  
Professional Ethics,  
Casper, WY

**10/6/03 – 10/10/03**  
IAAO Course 400  
Assessment Administration,  
Casper, WY

	State Total	County Average
<b>Staff (not including Assessor)</b>		
Full-time	136	5.91
Part-time	11	0.48
Full Time Equivalency (FTE)	141.5	6.15
<b>Appraiser certification as of 1/1/2003 (including Assessor)</b>		
Property Tax Appraiser - Permanent	81	3.52
Property Tax Appraiser - Temporary	36	1.57
Property Tax Appraiser Specialist	6	0.26
Not Certified	47	2.04
<b>Industrial Plant Appraisal</b>		
County Appraised	258	11.22
Contractor Appraised	191	8.30